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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/008,379

11/05/2001

Garrick Maenle

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4705

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EXAMINER

FINEMAN, LEE A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2872

DATE MAILED: 12/13/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/008,379	MAENLE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Lee Fineman	2872	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 9/13/05 & 9/30/05.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 99 and 102-168 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 99, 102-168 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This Office Action is in response to an amendment filed 13 September 2005 and 30 September 2005 in which claim 99 was amended, claims 102-168 were added and claims 79-98 and 100-101 were cancelled. Claims 99 and 102-168 are pending.

Claim Objections

1. Claims 99 and 102-168 are objected to because of the following informalities:
Throughout the claims, the limitation "course focus" should be --coarse focus--. Appropriate correction is required.

Election/Restrictions

2. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 99, 102-113, drawn to an automatic focusing method wherein each of the fine focus actions is performed more quickly than the initial coarse focus action, classified in class 359, subclass 368.
 - II. Claims 114-129, drawn to an automatic focusing method wherein the performance of at least one of the fine focus actions comprises defining an initial coordinate along the respective focal axis based on a global focal plane, classified in class 359, subclass 368.
 - III. Claims 130-144, drawn to an automatic focusing method wherein the performance of at least one of the fine focus actions comprises obtaining images of the slide at a plurality of coordinates within a predetermined range along the respective focal axis, classified in class 359, subclass 368.

- IV. Claims 145-168, drawn to an automatic focusing method wherein the performance of each of the fine focus actions comprises determining an in-focus coordinate along the respective focal axis, determining an area of fine focus jurisdiction surrounding the respective point, and correlating the in-focus coordinate to the respective fine focus jurisdiction, classified in class 359, subclass 368.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

3. Inventions I-IV are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, the claims of each invention evidence that the combination does not rely on the details of the other inventions for patentability. For example, inventions II-IV do not have quicker fine focus actions as in invention I and inventions I-III do not have fine focus jurisdictions as in invention IV. See MPEP § 806.05(d)
4. These inventions are distinct for the reasons given above. Further, the searches required for Groups I-IV are not coextensive and these inventions have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter. Therefore, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

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5. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

6. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Lee Fineman whose telephone number is (571) 272-2313. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 7:30 - 4:00.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Drew Dunn can be reached on (571) 272-2312. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



LAF
December 8, 2005


MARK A. ROBINSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER